

A
L E T T E R
FROM
The Ducheſs of *M—r—gh*,
IN THE
S H A D E S,
TO
The GREAT MAN.

There needs no gholt, my Lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this. ——— SHAKESPEAR.

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L E T T E R

FROM

The Duchess of Marlborough



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THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH

LONDON

A

LETTER, &c.

YOUR obligations to me, Sir, are not to cease with my life. They continue even beyond the grave; in the silence of which I could not rest, if I was not indulged the liberty of acquainting you of my being your zealous apologist in the shades. But do not attribute this entirely to the constancy of my regard for you, of which I left you so solemn and essential a mark. It may be partly accounted for by an old woman's tenaciousness of her opinion. It would hurt my vanity too much to give it up. And how many men in the world are there not in this respect rank old women?

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In

L E T T E R

FROM

The Bishop of M...



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A

L E T T E R, &c.

YOUR obligations to me, Sir, are not to cease with my life. They continue even beyond the grave; in the silence of which I could not rest, if I was not indulged the liberty of acquainting you of my being your zealous apologist in the shades. But do not attribute this entirely to the constancy of my regard for you, of which I left you so solemn and essential a mark. It may be partly accounted for by an old woman's tenaciousness of her opinion. It would hurt my vanity too much to give it up. And how many men in the world are there not in this respect rank old women?

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In vain, therefore, have certain *perturbed* spirits, who are lately descended to these regions, endeavoured to alter my sentiments of you : I am determined to stick to them, or at least appear to stick to them. Alive, I was never known to give up a point right or wrong ; dead, I have not changed character. After all, I should not care to pass for having totally thrown away my esteem and my liberality upon you, and consequently, either for having been miserably imposed upon, or for having been governed rather by whim than judgment ; which, however, between you and me, was, I am afraid, too often the case.

But as fond as I am of taking you to be one of the greatest men in any age or nation, for one of the most disinterested representatives of your country that ever graced the legends of modern patriotism, as well as for the most consummate statesman that ever took the reins of government in hand ; sorry I am to say it, I do not find so many, as I could wish, of my country-men

try-men here, to concur with me in that opinion.

My Lord-Duke, who is not absolutely purified from his love of money, sneers me intolerably for the sum I left away from his family, on no other consideration, or better security, than the most suspicious words and professions of a modern patriot.

Lord *Or—f—d* seconds him, with a coarse familiar laugh, in his old way, and swears by all the powers of self-interest, that you have given him no occasion to repent the notions he ever had of political prudery ; for that he never in his life heard a spouter of high heroics, or a boaster of patriotism, but that he was sure of him, on coming up to his price.

The good Lord *T—b—t* tells me too I shall have an admirable plea, in equity, to redemand the sum bequeathed you on your arrival here, and that there is no doubt of my recovering.

All this, you may be sure, was not over pleasing to me. But though, as I told you before, I never give up any thing, I was provoked to examine into the truth of things; and how to come at it, was not long a question with me.

There were enough of our country daily arriving here, some of whom were not so gratefully sensible as they ought to have been, of the propriety with which they were sacrificed in what they had the impudence to call your vagaries.

It was certainly amongst the new-comers from the upper realms, that I was to seek for the information I wanted. However I might be disposed then to impose on others, by concealing the result of my enquiry, if it should come out unfavorable to my prejudice, I was determined not to be imposed upon myself: I therefore avoided consulting any whom I could suppose to have been tainted with party-spirit, or biased by

by any personal motive whatever, whether for or against you. The way to get at truth is certainly not to seek it where the passions have expelled or will not admit it.

Amongst such, I despised equally those who abused, or who admired you. At length I met with two personages who answered the description I had proposed to myself. They were even talking of you when I accosted them, and their sentiments were diametrically opposite. So much the better. From the collision of their opinions I had the more reason to expect the light of truth would be struck out. The sum of what I learnt from them I now transmit to you : you cannot well be the worse for it ; at least you cannot fail of thanking me for the honor I do you.

Your partizan, at my request, first opened the debate. He stated all your good qualities, and the good effects that have redounded from them to your country, or have been imagined to

to do so. He expatiated on your patriot firmness and prodigious steadiness to your principles; your disinterestedness; your love of justice; your irresistible eloquence; your profound knowledge of affairs foreign and domestic; the great patronage you have given to all men of merit, amongst whom alone you had chosen your coadjutors; the emergence of a new order of splendid days since your administration; your measures blooming with victory, glory, and peace, and that will surely bear those delightful fruits, unless blasted by domestic perfidiousness and malignance. Your orator then proceeded, *painting* in the strongest colors that fiend Corruption, and all the powers of Dulness expiring under a hero uniting in himself the spirits of an *Aristides* and a *Cato*; your delicacy and wisdom in the choice of your allies; all the enemies of the nation trembling at your nod, or sprawling in the dust where you have laid them, and humbly suing for a peace you will not grant them but on your own terms; your measures of
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taking *Cape-Breton, Senegal*, with all the rest of the great and signal advantages to the nation by you procured, and specified in a most solemn authoritative speech, which recording, as it did, the wonders of your reign, was not, perhaps, for its candor in giving ALL the truth, the least amongst them. In short, he concluded with an emphatic assertion, that since it had been your good fortune to obtain the public confidence, so necessary to strengthen the hands of a M——r, it was even a species of treason to the welfare and interest of the nation, to attempt in this critical season, to weaken your authority, or to rob you of that popularity which alone can enable you to add the mighty things you have promised, to those you have already done: that he would therefore have every man treated as an enemy to his country who did not admire you as much as he did: and with this he concluded, with an air of triumph, in which I heartily concurred with him.

I expected

I expected to see his adversary struck mute, overwhelmed with such a pomp of words and pathos as had been poured out in your favor: instead of which, only shrugging up his shoulders, he coolly said, that as he had long in the upper world known that gentleman who had given you this fine character, to be one of great worth and honor, and a sincere lover of his country, he paid that respect to his prejudice, which he did not suppose that gentleman would, in return, pay to his reason. That he would however give us his own motives of dissent, both for my satisfaction, and to avoid the charge of singularity, or of malevolence.

Proceeding then, he spoke to the principal heads of your praise, mentioned in your admirer's speech.

First, as to your good or ill qualities, he desired a just distinction might be made between speaking of you as a private person, or as a man of the public. That as to the first, he held
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in the utmost scorn and detestation, all sort of personality; that it was not his business to inquire whether you was in a milk-diet, or revelled in Champagne; whether you was content with a plain table, or had it loaded with all the poisonous compounds of the French cookery; whether you virtuously and sensibly adhered to the chaste joys of a marriage bed, or, ignorant of true pleasure, ranged the sex for it, where it is never to be found, in variety: that however, as purity of morals was deservedly a great prejudice in favor of a public m—r, he thought it would be wronging his own sense of candor to pass over in silence that, in that respect, he had the highest and the most honorable opinion of you, believing you would have been but what you are, even if you had not been a valetudinarian.

That as to your office-character, which being of a public nature, concerned every one, every one had a just right to canvass it, under the due restrictions of order, decency, and truth; and

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that

that ministers, as yet in England, were not so unhappy as to be in danger of keeping their faults, for want of their fellow-subjects daring to tell them of them; which would be attended with yet a worse consequence, the nation's ruinously tolerating them in places, for want of their being sufficiently known.

That as to your boasted patriot firmness and steadiness to your principles, he would not take upon him to controvert them; but fairly left it to others to judge upon their own knowledge of facts relative thereto, facts as manifest as the sun. That for himself he had always apprehended you had opened your first campaign against the ministers upon the strictest Anti-H——n principles; which, however, mean nothing more than that Great Britain should not be sacrificed, at every turn, to a little province of G——ny, not only destructively for that nation, but for that province to which she should be sacrificed: that your loud founded profession of these principles
had

had their usual effect, of getting any one a place, that knew how to avail himself of them; for that you so galled the ministers, whose tenure of power was no other than a fatal complaisance to G——n measures that they were glad almost at any rate to purchase their peace of you.

The effect, he says, of the argument, in form of a place, was instantaneous. It carried immediate conviction with it. You turned about so quick as to astonish even Corruption herself, as familiar to her as were those perversions she so frequently operated. Should even that answer of yours to the expostulation of one of your friends about this suddenness of change, in which you neither respected that public whose opinion had given you all your importance, nor yourself, be an answer falsely imputed to you, though it stuck you up in all the print-shops in town, in not the very decenter attitude, shewing your *dis-embarrassed face*, as if to bid those who had trusted you kiss it; it matters very little.

The actual cessation of opposition from the very moment you had thus hector'd yourself into a place, when surely the times had not had time to change, sufficiently determines the nature of such a procedure. Then it was that you so cavalierly turned your back on that *Troy* you had defended, and left the breach practicable for the introduction of the wooden horse, pregnant with the armed forces of *H——r* and *H—e*, against the pernicious consequences of which, none had more fiercely declaimed than yourself; so that on your changing sides, there needed nothing more to confute you than to oppose you to yourself. This same wooden horse was however now all of a sudden become with you the Palladium of the British system: *Equo ne credite Teucris*; (do I spell it right?) was no longer the motto at the head of your politics. This conduct, however, your admirer's antagonist proceeded to observe, seemed to do as little honor to your head as to your heart: none could well see the good man, and surely as little the
great

great man, in it. One would naturally enough have concluded, and even sworn, that you would not ever be seen again on the ranks and in the character of a patriot. But times such as the present ones were made to mock all probability. You knew, it seems, the people, and what they were capable of bearing, better than those who argued only from the reason of things. Whether you imagined you had afforded too good a pennyworth, and wanted the court to buy you over again; whether you had implicitly sold your acquiescence only for a term of years; whether it was a kind of native restlessness in you, or, in short, whatever was the motive, your volcano of patriotism once more burst forth into a fiery stream of eloquence, that, like the lave of Vesuvius, carried all before it. And what was the object? the very same as you had before renounced. H——ns and H-f——ns, H-f——ns and H——ns, became once more the butt of your apparent rage; which had once more the same success. There was so much

much of magic in that sound, Britain instinctively and so strongly felt, that all her evils came from thence, that she took you once more for the champion of her interest, and not the prize-fighter of your own. One would have thought that, as to your past conduct, the whole body of the people had plentifully quaffed the streams of Lethe: every thing was forgiven, every thing was forgot.

The people once more took you under their protection, and hoisted you on their shoulders, that you might step from them, upon a level, in at the window of the royal closet. Then it was that you had obviously the most glorious part to act, and, what is more, an equally easy one. You had nothing more to do than, when in the m ——— y, to stick to those very principles that had advanced you to it.

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Every thing concurred to recommend it to you, public policy and private interest. The times especially, the times, beyond all the most sanguine expectation, favored that part. A power by chance only the enemy to the enemy of Britain, and who never had been a friend to her : a power under the slur of a legal outlawry ; a power who could never effectually serve or be served by her ; a power who could do her little or no good, and might do her infinite mischief by embroiling her with all the rest of the powers of Europe, had not the appearance of having changed the *times* in favor of those continental connexions against which you had but just before levelled such a storm of eloquence. The H——ns and H-f—ns too had, by their famous convention entered into without consulting this government, surely afforded the fairest occasion that could have been wished, to cut them adrift. In short, one would have thought the new minister had bespoke the play,

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every thing was so ready to be acted for his benefit, if he would have been but true to his country and to himself; or had but understood enough of the theatre and business of it to have kept to that part, which had (against all reasons for *him* at least to hope) procured him such applause. Then was the time for you to plume yourself upon your late high-sounded Anti-germanism which now the aspect and state of things demonstrate to be as essential to sound policy, as Anti-gallicanism itself. But can, or will, posterity believe, what however seems no wonder in these portentous times, that the very man who had fulminated against continental connexions, who had even forced himself into power, in virtue of the popularity which that fulmination had procured him; that he, at the very juncture of time when the perniciousness of those connexions never was more manifest, plunged over head and ears into them, new-cemented one of the most obnoxious, and the most dangerous of them with P-ff-a, and renewed another with *H—r*, &c.

&c. which had been fortunately broken off, of itself? Who could suspect that you would go over to those opponents you had fairly driven out of the field, and have hoisted again that rag-worn flag of Germany you had forced them to strike? Yet so it was: and what is yet more incredible, a few momentary flashes of a success in no sense their own, were sufficient to blind to such a degree one of the most profound, solid people in the universe, that they did not see the consequences which either actually did, or in all human probability would, result from such politics. They did not then consider, amongst many other bad effects to follow,

THAT nothing could be more wrong than to connect so fair a cause as their own, with one which, to all Europe besides, had from the very first step taken in it carried a condemned face; by which means, the welfare of the British nation stands endangered, the so desirable unity of her system broken, and the risk of her own war is un-

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necessarily doubled; being made to depend on the issue of a most precarious continental one, and she to pay for this folly into the bargain.

THAT the aid of money or troops employed to strengthen that cause on the continent, would not only proportionally weaken their power to carry on the war effectually in its natural channels, the sea and America, but cool the friendship, if not even turn hostile towards them, those nations with whom their greatest interest is to maintain the strictest amity and fair correspondence.

THAT such an alliance, by thus multiplying the enemies of the nation, or at least robbing her of her most useful friends, made it necessary to keep measures more than otherwise she need do, with the hitherto neutral powers. That if undue concessions should therefore be made either to Spain or to Holland, the nation had no one to thank for it but those statesmen :
statesmen

(statesmen too!) who had hand-bolted and coupled her with an ally, who had brought with him for his contingent a great army indeed, but employed in his own destruction; himself to feed with subsidies; a cause, which, whether clear or not clear, was in effect the same thing to Britain, and to be supported by armies in her pay; and the enmity of most of the powers in Europe; all whom to brave, must not only be a downright coffee-house Bobadil's or Drawcansir's air, but appear more in the stile of the court of Barbary than of a great and respectable nation, whose wish never used to be other than that her justice should be the measure of her power.

THAT from the instant the German empire stood possessed, in form, of this cause, the worst office that possibly could be done to the K. of Pr—, and especially to H——r, H—se, &c. was Britain's any ways interfering in it; since she could only, without a probability of saving them, exasperate matters, so as to bring on the

utmost extremities to which the ban of the empire could proceed. That this interference was also greatly beneath the majesty, and certainly not conformable to the justice, of this nation, who would herself scarce like to see a foreign power intermeddle between her laws and a subject; and that every prince in Germany, the emperor himself included, however absolutely a sovereign as to his own subjects, is no more than a subject himself to the laws of the empire. To say arbitrarily that those laws are bad, or, without proof, that the administrators of them are corrupted, was, instead of reasoning, abusing; which was indeed the grand resource of the wrong-heads of the times, and especially of the head of them.

THAT as to the money and troops sent over to Germany, by way of diverting the French from falling with their whole force upon Prussia, this measure could at best, and humanly, speaking, but for a while put off the evil day. That
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the French could not wish for a better game, than Britain's putting herself to so immense an expence, risking the blood of her subjects where France would most wish to meet them, incurring a general odium; and for what? To furnish France with a plausible excuse of inability to crush that very prince whom it would be madness in her to think of crushing; and thereby destroying the only power in Germany capable of ballancing that House of Austria which Unbritish measures have unfortunately driven for refuge into the arms of an insidious friend, and whose alliance might therefore be reasonably expected to be as unpermanant as it is unnatural, if the obstinate attachment of the English to their mistaken politics was not to draw the ties closer. When, whatever sacrifices are made by Austria to France, for France's suffering her to wreak her resentment, will all be at the expence of the English interest in Europe: and O may it not be in America! In the mean time, must not humanity suffer at hearing Germany so often
mournfully

mournfully resounding with postilions wailing the fall of her bravest sons? Sweet music to the French! Whether they fall on the side of Prussia or of Austria, they are Germans still. Yes France, France is the only gainer by their calamity, and to Britain it is they impute it. Her carelessness in not refuting accusations, has given her greatest enemy the arms of appearance against her, and appearances it is that govern the world. To rely entirely on innocence, and to leave truth to its insensible perspiration, through time, is not always, at least in politics, the safest course. Mischief irreparable may be done by a calumny before it is exploded,

THAT the nation, by abandoning the steady light of reason, and suffering herself to be miserably misled by the false glare of a Will-o'th'-wisp, had gone out of the plainest road imaginable, into a wild of precipices on all sides, without an opening to safety: for surely an ignominious

nomorious peace can never deserve the name of safety, and that perhaps one of the most desperate of her symptoms, was not only her not seeming to know her being in danger, but her insensibility to loss of reputation, to say nothing of that of her interest, by those continental connections which had exposed one of the best and honestest of Kings to be treated with the utmost irreverence, both by her enemies and allies; and the nation herself to be considered as one, to whose politics it was only now wanting to negotiate a quadruple alliance, by inviting into it the emperor of Morocco, and the most serene republic of Algiers.

THAT if, through your rage of holding power by the mis-use of a popularity usurped without the least title to it, your designingly blustering airs should be mistaken, for that true spirit and quick sense of honor, that so well becomes a nation; or if even a just war should be consequently resolved on with Holland, preferably to
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the tamely giving her a satisfaction, to which she is not however without some pretensions; yet such are the national circumstances, under this continental involence in a cause with which she has originally nothing to do, that on such a war breaking out, France would probably have more reason than Britain to rejoice in the issue; and the nation would have ample cause for averring, that you had been steady only to her ruin, after being inconstant at a juncture, when the not being so would not only have saved, but essentially served her; to say nothing of the stability which would, in spite even of the court itself, have thereby redounded to your own power: that you had consequently been, if not false to your country's interest, at least ignorant of your own, or of both.

THAT the British nation seems also not to reflect, that the distracting her councils by the pernicious admixture of the continental embroils, takes away all point of view from her, and superfluously

perfluously subjects her to the carrying on or paying for two wars instead of one: That could she even adopt so mad an idea, as that her navy, powerful as it is, in concert with the land-force of Prussia, Hanover, Hesse, Brunswick, and the mighty potentate of Buckeburgh, could give laws to all Europe, and consequently realize in herself that chimera of universal empire; such a hope has but a slippery foundation in her dependence on a prince, who, granting him all that most religious fidelity to treaties, of which he has given some memorable proofs, may yet be distressed and compelled, by the paramount law of self-preservation, to leave Britain in the lurch. Should Britain and Prussia, on the other hand, instead of wearying out the powers with whom they are at war, than the expectation of which a vainer there could hardly be, they themselves become tired out and exhausted with undecisive operations, what will then become of the fruits of Britain's maritime successes? Will not their fate in Asia, Africa, and America, be ra-

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ther regulated by that of Europe, than that of Europe by them? Yet widely different might have been the case, if those powers, instead of being alienated from Britain by the unaccountable part she has taken, had seen her only acting upon her own bottom: they would then have most likely been glad to see weights taken out of the scale of France, and thrown into that of Britain and of Liberty. None of them probably would have wished the restitution of any conquest she might have made upon France; whereas, as things are, judge of the impolicy of Britain that has been so great as to render the cause of even France a popular one in Europe!

THAT the people of England had run headlong into a grievous mistake of bustle for business; a mistake owing to that imbecility and inactivity of your predecessors, contrasted to which your schemes, crude and undigested as they were, had an air of life, and of doing something:

thing. They did not consider, that wrong or silly measures may ultimately prove as fatal as no measures at all ; that the paths to perdition are numerous, and often diametrically opposite ; but that the right roads are never more than a very few, which the point is to hit. That, in short, the scratch-work of expeditions, which exulcerated France without weakening her, or deficient or ill-concerted plans of operations, are no more a mark of life, than a sick man's tossing and throwing his arms about in the delirium of a fever is a vital symptom.

Here this scrupulous weigher of merits stopped. His adversary, your adherent, told him, that he must have been, when alive, under the bias of some personal interest, some resentment, malice, or party-spirit, of which the impression still remained upon him. The other smiled, and observed, that nothing was so injurious to mankind, so stupidly absurd, nor so common, as indistinctly to place all private opinions

upon the administration of public affairs to the account of some such motives. That motives in general not being susceptible of ascertainment even by the man himself who professed them, the public gave very little heed to any professions: that truth of facts and arguments was what it considered, as the only object worthy of its attention. That he, to the best of his knowledge and understanding, had, as an impartial by-stander, ever represented the truth, and the truth only; nor that but with the most perfect indifference about its reception, unless indeed so far as its utility to the public might be affected by it. That as to yourself, his own constant opinion of you had been formed upon a judgment too cool, too tranquil, too unprejudiced, not to make him sensible that he was doing you an honor, in his deigning to take cognizance of your conduct, which nothing but its unaccountable relation to the public welfare could justify to himself. That you then, if any thing, he rather pitied, for the numbers who did

did not know you, having affixed to you such an idea of over-importance as, whilst it gives you power to do infinite mischief, only increases your blindness to your natural inability of answering the raised expectation. That, as to any thing further, he was extremely pleased at being dead and buried out of the way of all nonsense in the upper world, and of any longer seeing, without his being able to help it, his wretched country in prey to Folly, that genuine issue of the left-handed marriage of Power with Presumption: No time surely more desirable not to live in!

He wanted here to leave off, but I desired him to proceed, which, in complaisance to me he did. He observed, that it was not long before your unsteadiness, in turning against your country that very influence her voice had procured you for her defence, was nobly punished. The old m——rs saw you with as much pleasure, as if you had never changed before, dishonor
yourself

yourself by joining them, and thus give them their revenge for the contempt with which you had, perhaps not unjustly, loaded them. The well-meaning people rejoiced indeed, because they imagined this unanimity of the heads of parties portended well to the administration of affairs; not considering that it was by what they should agree upon, and not merely by their agreeing, that their unanimity was to be estimated. Alas! little did the people in general know or conceive, that, after all, a German interest was to be the center of union; and that the new m———r, their own darling elect, was preparing to strike deeper into the continent than any ministers before had dared to venture. The old ones especially must have voluptuously enjoyed your thus over-shooting them in their own bow, assured as they were that the prize of it would be to themselves. Those old staunch complaisants to the court-passion, knew very well they should have all the merit, where they wanted to have it, of those measures, which,

which, without your popularity to give them countenance, could not have taken place. They durst not have proposed to send a man to Germany; your face was set to the sending of thousands; and in what a manner too! Then it was that the national interest, under your auspices, was once more shifted from the broad basis of Europe, to the little diminished point of two or three provinces of Germany, and those liable to that ban of the empire, the execution of which will probably not ultimately be found to depend on that ridiculous army which has been commissioned with the name of it.

In the mean time, the favorites behind the scenes must have been highly diverted. You had despised their judgment, and what a proof was you now giving of your's, in suffering yourself to be their temporary tool! They doubtless carested, admired, and extolled you to the skies, whilst you was thus so kind at once to do what they wanted, and to bring all the consequences upon yourself: consequences which
they

they could not but know (nor be too much reproached for knowing) would do the French a service on the continent, which would by much out-balance the mischief done them by naval expeditions, the reduction of Cape-Breton itself included. This banter of theirs however must have produced a fine laugh in the sleeve, whilst those who always despised you as much as you had affected to despise them, were thus playing you off. You was now their “great man, a
 “man to be supported; nay, a man that knew
 “business:” which, by the by, is the last quality they would have allowed you before; and all this you swallowed, whilst they were lolling out their tongues by stealth at you, looking archly at one another; as much as to say, “We have him, he cannot retreat now.” Their part however was an infamous one; since it could not be acted but at the expence of their country: but then, what must your’s be, in your being thus their tool and jest? You could not complain of this usage as unfair, because you

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knew them, as it is pretty plain they did you. But when the consequences of your last defection shall come into existence, and into existence some of them are already come, and the rest hastening into it, when you shall at length discover that you have been amused and cajoled by your colleagues in office; what will you do? Again will you have recourse to your old friends the people, with a complaint of your having been sacrificed by those new friends of your's, to whom you had yourself sacrificed that very people? and ought they not with one accord to answer, that you was rightly served; that their wrong was in some measure revenged by it; that they were sick of biting so often at so stale a bait; sick, in short, at being so repeatedly made the tools of their own perdition, by their being deceived with false signs and colors, into bestowing their influence upon one, who, the instant he had obtained it, turned it against themselves, his political creators out of nothingness? But they will not answer so, it may be said, and you will be received with open arms, as if you

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had

had not deserved such an answer. But then it must be allowed too, that these are precisely the times in which the most flagrant improbabilities have greatly the odds on their side; a hint, by the by, not unimprovable at Arthur's. He should not then wonder (he added) to see you once more availing yourself of that single circumstance which had preserved to you your popularity, your having at once humored the populace and the court, in their passion for the K—— of Pr——; a passion, which on each side had very different motives, and of which you could not have too strongly resisted the blindness in both court and people, and perhaps in yourself; which last supposition is, however wretched, the only excuse for you. That was he again in life, he should die with laughing, if once more putting on the heroic buskin and theatrical air, you was to begin with a prologue upon your being proof against money and lust of power, and of your sighing for a retreat in the stile of a Scipio, whilst only with-held from
it

it by your tender patriotic concern for that dear dear country of your's, which you would be loth to leave to deplore the desertion of such a father as you have been to her: and then proceed to lay before an audience, melted with all this mock pathos, the unpromising aspect of affairs, the difficulties incident to raising the supplies of the war; of all which, it seems, you know so much, as to know that the nation has such inexhaustible resources to carry it on, that whoever should dare to suggest the contrary, ought to be considered as a traitor, and pursued accordingly. Now, the jest of such a declamation, if jesting was quite so proper in so serious a concern, would be not only the effrontery, but the glaring falsity of the assertion and conclusions: since the lowest man of the nation, grant him but common sense, and the moderate knowledge of the present constitution of things, would have a right to say to you, with all that stern coolness which attends the contempt of a silly imposition, " Sir, if the nation is so

“ unfortunate as to experience a failure of cre-
 “ dit at her greatest need, she must be sunk as
 “ low indeed in her spirit and understanding as
 “ it is possible for her to be in her circumstan-
 “ ces, if she can suffer the very man who is
 “ himself palpably the occasion of it, to insult
 “ her with an attempt to make, or, in truth to
 “ rather continue, her a party with him in the
 “ farther deception of herself, till all discovery
 “ of it comes too late. But surely, Sir, you of
 “ all mankind ought to be the least surprized
 “ at the present measures not inviting credit;
 “ since it is not so long since, that even so
 “ great and so wise a man as you are, thought
 “ them as infernally bad ones, as those may do
 “ who now with-hold their money: an opi-
 “ nion which, though you may have changed
 “ upon being more enlightened by a post, might
 “ not be the case of those who had not like you
 “ got one. Those continental connexions which
 “ you had condemned, defended, condemned
 “ and defended again, just as you was in or out
 “ of

“ of place, could not to any solid, sensible per-
 “ sons even have changed aspect, unless greatly
 “ in favor of the expediency of having less to do
 “ with them than ever. Will you then dare to
 “ say, that those who now think as yourself not
 “ long since thought, are in the wrong? when,
 “ in defiance of that greedily swallowed speech
 “ of your dictating, in which you too success-
 “ fully dazzled the people by shewing them
 “ only the sunny side of things, in order to
 “ captivate for the moment their confidence
 “ and support, every circumstance concurs to
 “ strengthen the reasonableness of that aversion
 “ to meddling in the German quarrel, which
 “ was more than once your boast, as it has been
 “ more than once your sacrifice? Is Britain
 “ then perched upon your head as on a weather-
 “ cock, to turn with every gust of wind that
 “ whiffles you round? Ought the nation, do
 “ you think, to adhere to you, for that your
 “ desertion of her, which was all your return
 “ for the countenance she had lent you, and
 “ which

“ which alone gave you consequence enough
 “ for your desertion to be of any? Is your
 “ country obliged to you for the reduction of
 “ Cape Breton, Senegal, or other atchievements
 “ by sea; when the sea was, by the united voice
 “ of nature, the people, and common sense, so
 “ strongly pointed out to be her element of
 “ war; since of what you was thus seeming to
 “ build up on one hand, you have in fact, with
 “ the other, so undermined the foundation, by
 “ your continuing or renewing connexions with
 “ the continent, that the whole of the laudable
 “ superstructure is likely to come to the ground
 “ with a tenfold crash and ruin? In this sense,
 “ (and may it not prove a just one!) those suc-
 “ cesses are to the nation rather afflictions, and
 “ in you a guilt instead of a merit. In the
 “ mean time, your present game looks as if it
 “ was not to extricate your country out of the
 “ labyrinth into which you have brought her,
 “ but to prolong her errors. You would never
 “ else prematurely affect to dread an ignomini-
 “ ous

"ous peace, when of there being soon any
 "peace at all there is little probability tho'
 "that indeed is no rule of judgment. Things
 "are at present too embroiled, and the minds
 "of the powers at war as yet too inflamed. But
 "if such a peace was, through the force of dire
 "necessity, to take place, you, you especially,
 "ought not to inveigh against it. It will be
 "your own work. And, let me tell you, exe-
 "crable as an ignominious peace is, there is
 "yet something more execrable, and full as
 "pregnant with perdition; and that is, an ig-
 "nominious war. The British war was in its
 "outset the fairest imaginable. Ask all Eu-
 "rope what it is now? Success, which makes
 "every thing white, does not seem to have got
 "us much favor with that universal society by
 "which nations are fairly judged. Our allies
 "are not much multiplied even since the glori-
 "ous victory at Crevelt. In short, our own war
 "is so greatly changed in its nature, since the
 "fatal ingraftment on it of a foreign cause, that
 "all

“ all the advantages already obtained, or presum-
 “ able, humanly speaking, in the course of it, can
 “ neither procure glory to the nation, nor stability
 “ to themselves. In the mean time, whenever
 “ those in power (yourself perhaps one of them)
 “ what with urgency from without, and repug-
 “ nance from within, shall, nor is the time per-
 “ haps far off, be in that most awkward situa-
 “ tion of neither being able to keep what con-
 “ quests are made, nor of daring to give them
 “ up; there will be still in this dilemma a sub-
 “ terfuge left for you, to which your modesty
 “ will hardly hinder you from having recourse.
 “ Exclaim violently against a desperate faction,
 “ for having thwarted your admirable counsels,
 “ and clogged your finely-schemed operations,
 “ out of envy, as if a miscreant there could be
 “ on earth so very an idiot, so low, as not ra-
 “ ther to pity than envy you. Then give a
 “ loose to the tragic pathos, spout heroics,
 “ rend the roof with patriot rants, not forget-
 “ ting the hollow groan over that dear country
 “ of your’s, to which your steadiness has been
 “ such

“ such a blessing. And though any peace al-
 “ most must be better than a war with such a
 “ double face, a black and a white one, as we are
 “ now vainly carrying on, yet do you take special
 “ care to wash your hands of any peace, which
 “ however justified by that necessity to the in-
 “ ducing of which yourself have so largely con-
 “ tributed, may be disagreeable to the people.
 “ Protest, declaim, fulminate against it. The
 “ noise you will make will not only preserve
 “ your popularity with the superficial multitude,
 “ but collaterally answer another very valuable
 “ purpose, that of distracting the public judg-
 “ ment, and of drowning the voice of reason,
 “ which would fairly bring home to you the
 “ charge of being yourself greatly the original
 “ cause of that evil. You have before now
 “ been listened to with perhaps as little reason
 “ for being listened to, and why not again?
 “ In the mean time, take this along with you
 “ for the quieting your conscience, that how-
 “ ever little you may deserve to lead a nation,

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“ at

“ at least that nation which will suffer herself to
 “ be led by you, cannot, should utter perdition
 “ be the consequence, have any great reason to
 “ complain of her not having deserved it.”

Here this cavilling malignant ended a speech,
 of which he begged pardon for the length, and
 which, as he said, he had put into the mouth
 of a supposed living man, to give it the more
 life-heat.

Your staunch admirer now interposed, and ob-
 served to his opponent, that, after all his pro-
 fessions of candor at the out-set of the debate,
 he did not make due allowance for your having
 been obliged to take matters as you found them
 already so settled, before your assumption into
 the ministry, that you could not, without a vio-
 lence too injurious to the rest of the system of
 things, break off short these continental mea-
 sures, of which he made so mighty a crime to
 you.

The

The other's answer was as follows: That pure charity had been the motive of that omission with which he was reproached, since that very previousness, he who reproached him mentioned, was palpably the highest aggravation of your failure; for that the pre-existence of those measures was not unknown to you, before your getting into power on the strength of having railed at them. That your tame acquiescence, and even active concurrence then in them after you had carried that point of power for yourself, proved to a demonstration the nature of the motives and spirit upon which you had founded your opposition: and that you had coveted a high office, not for the sake of redressing those national wrongs of which yourself had so justly complained in those you abused and supplanted; but that yourself might precisely do the same or worse than they did, and reap that advantage from those sacrifices which you envied them. In short, the point of contest seemed to be, not who should extricate your coun-

try out of her plunge, but who should thrust her more desperately in.

To this your friend replied : That there was another more favorable way of solving that apparent inconsistency in your conduct, which was, that you had been forced, as it were, by way of compromise, to yield to some ill, that you might be able to do some good : that, conscious of your intrusive, and consequently awkward figure in the closet, you was glad to soften things there in order to keep your place in it ; and, under the favor of humoring the predominant passion there, to make way for those national points which would not otherwise pass without such a compliance : in which light your compliance was rather that of a patriot than of a courtier, since you still made the good of your country your port of destination, though, by the wind's continuing to blow too strong in a contrary quarter, you was forced to trim to it, and go upon another tack.

His

His antagonist, in answer to this, observed, that he had often heard this plea offered for you by well meaning people, and that he had always heard it with that pity due to the errors of a good intention, or of that amiable good-nature which delights more in excusing than condemning. The truly good always think the best of others. That unhappily however in your case, every plea brought for you, and this one especially, made strongly against you. For that nothing appearing more plain, as before remarked, than that you well knew of those continental engagements, since the declaiming against them with as much vehemence as justice, had been your means of ascension to power; you could not therefore plead ignorance of the reasons yourself had alledged of your fierce wrath at them. In what then had those reasons ceased? Was it not more evident than ever, that at the very juncture when you renounced them, and adopted the measures to which they had been opposed;

opposed, those measures had so pernicious a tendency, that there were no points you could carry by acquiescing in them, but what would not be only barely blanked by them, but must even ultimately turn against your country? France was her enemy. Was it right then to give France a handle to draw off the attention of Europe from so defensible a cause as was Britain's at the beginning of the war, to fix it, unfavorably for her, upon that incident in the course of it, an alliance so liable to exception, which, instead of strengthening, must absolutely itself be her weak side? which must, if not obstruct her successes, in all human probability, make her lose the fruit of those she may have gained, or will gain, on her own bottom at the expence of her own blood and treasure. That one would think you had accepted of power only to consummate the sacrifice already begun of the national points to the great antinational one, instead of making the last subservient to the first, as has been urged in your behalf. That in lieu
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of endeavouring to loosen, you had drawn closer, the engagements between this nation and a Prince, who, by doing so much mischief, had got two such totally different reputations, the one all over Europe, and the other in Britain only : a Prince who is evidently driving on in that career of perdition, which in the natural course of things must await him, unless he is saved by a miracle : since even his victories, it may without a paradox be said, only insure his ruin, by encouraging him to brave it, and make a necessity of it to those powers combined against him, who must exhaust or tire him out, even in their defeats by him. This too may happen notwithstanding those admirably trusty recruits he raises by that new and extraordinary procedure, of pressing into his service the sworn subjects of those Protestant states he has invaded and pillaged ; all by way of defending the Protestant religion, and reinstating the liberties of Germany ! That whenever such an event should come into existence, which, however, no one could

could less wish than himself, you could not at least plead the improbability of it in your own defence. For that, to speak in the modern oratorical stile, even the different images presented by Britain and Prussia might have kept off the idea of bringing them into conjunction: Prussia representing a shallow rivulet, as enormously as suddenly swelled by a mere accident, bursting its banks, and with its overflow spreading a dreadful devastation through the neighbouring fields, sooner or later to be reduced and shrunk back into its original littleness; happy, if not wholly annihilated by way of prevention for the future! whereas Britain appears like a majestic river, intrinsically rich from its own perennial source, taking its course in a regular channel, and fertilizing as it flows. The interests of two such states could hardly with any sort of propriety be identified, or made mutually to depend on one another. That besides, nothing was falser than the pretence of any necessity in you for your acquiescing in the continuance of the continental connexions,

nexions, by way of compromise for those points, of which such as were recommended by the nation met with so great, though probably in the end vain, success; whilst the others of your own planning were either crude, abortive, or answered no valuable purpose in proportion to their expence, or to the expectations raised by them. That the non-necessity of such an acquiescence was plain from the power of your popularity, (no matter, as to the effect, whether sharpened or fairly won) which would have made your colleagues in the administration think twice before they had ventured to brave the ill consequences of your tribunitian *veto*. That if thus backed by the whole force of the community on your side, and especially by that of demonstrable Truth, opposed to which all human authority makes so contemptible a figure, you could not have prevailed for breaking, or at least loosening the continental connexions; your resignation would not have been only a duty, but the very best policy in *you*, granting even that such a resignation would have been only what so many have been before,

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mere

mere grimace, a retiring back to take the greater leap forward: for that such was the gratitude of the nation, that she would never have deserted the man who had not deserted her. This is plain, since even on the bare appearance of your still standing by her in a few comparatively unessential points, what numbers do not perceive, or madly fond of their prejudices will not feel, that she is deserted by you in the main one? That in this instance of your unsteadiness you had not specified yourself either the friend to your country or to yourself. That even Hanover had the justest room to complain of your pursuing that very tenor of councils which had already proved so destructive to that state, and of your thus, as it were, sealing its ruin. Hanover, which might have remained perfectly safe in its pristine mediocrity, under the common bond of the empire, if it had not been sillily lifted up into the rank of nations, where its *frog-swell* must, if not even burst, give it a most awkward figure: and where it will have that preposterous policy of a weak preference to thank, if it should

should add one instructive example more to many, of things forced up beyond their due pitch, only to be dashed to pieces on their precipitation to that ground again where they were before quietly lying.—That, in fact, then you had, in this your second or third departure from Anti-hanoverianism, been at once grossly wanting to Britain and to Hanover, both whose interests ever required their being constantly kept separate, or carried on collaterally, like parallel lines, never to touch. But that, not content with taking under your august protection the German connexions, just as you found them, you had, by going deeper into them than any of your predecessors had dared to do, acted as if you had imagined you could not too soon make repentance follow the simplicity of forgetting, in your favor, that faith once forfeited, is, like departed life, never to return again. Under your auspices then, that insatiate German gulph, which had already swallowed, in vain, so much British treasure, blood, and even honor,

kept yawning still for more; and now, after the immense sums already palpably thrown away, the British troops must be sent off, and where? why, exactly to where, if the French had been obliged to pay the freight of the transport, they would not have had a bad bargain of their being sent; so little good they can do, so wretched a figure they must make; not as to their courage, for that is undoubted, (they are Britons) but in a state of subordination infinitely beneath the majesty of the nation, and in a way less to save than to subject the electoral dominions to the extremities of the laws of war and of the empire; besides drawing on this nation the odium of her seeking to perpetuate for her own ends that dreadful civil war which is actually to this hour making a shambles of Germany. That he would not add here, that this step would also have the air, to those not better informed, of supporting and rewarding the Hanoverians for the breach of the convention of Closter-seyen; because he was determined to believe the French

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the violators of it ; as he could not, without being too much hurt, imagine that a British minister, especially the British Cato too! could possibly promote, cherish, or abet, so black and perfidious a procedure : a procedure which would be treason to mankind, in adding fresh horrors to war, as if there were not enough already, by the distrust such a precedent must introduce, cutting off the small remains of humanity left amidst its rage and blood-thirstiness ; a procedure which might even draw down the vengeance of Heaven on the national arms, or at least, in the issue of things, verify that just remark, that such as forfeit honor for the sake of advantage, most commonly lose in the end both honor and advantage. No ! it could not be you, that, with Probity and Patriotic virtue holding up your train, would act so execrable a part.—That he would only then observe, that this measure of sending away the British forces, which had, it seems, the great authority of your countenance to it ; this measure, by which the nation was

weakened

weakened at home and dishonored abroad, was surely not a proof of your having adopted just no more of the continental measures than you could well help, on finding them already fixed.— That this was making a most cruel use of the people's confidence in you, and of their just and noble spirit of resentment against France, which by this adulteration of it with Germanism, was degenerated into the absurdity of hating the French more than they loved themselves. That, in this war especially, France, for every considerable ally that she had, stood indebted to that excentric policy of Britain, which had also frightened and made the neutral powers keep aloof from her councils. That France had great reason to rejoice at the designing mercenary use made of her name, in every quarrel kindled by her on the continent, to cry France, and halloo Britain on to take side, no matter for the impropriety of her interfering at all, so that German troops might have but the benefit of standing upon her pay-books. Thus, for the sake of gratifying

gratifying a few German princes with comparatively an inconsiderable sum, the nation was collaterally plunged without mercy, into expences needless, exorbitant, and ruinous, as well as into an inextricable chaos of false measures ; so that herself was made to pay for her own perdition. How different from this conduct was that of the model of British sovereigns, the good Queen Elizabeth ! one of whose great excellencies lay, in that, ever faithful to her insular situation, she knew perfectly well how to make her advantage of all the parties on the continent ; but wisely took care herself never to enter deeply into any of them. It is true, she had no foreign dominions.

Here this vain declaimer paused ; your zealous advocate, without making him a single concession to your prejudice, asked him with a little air of triumph, what he had to say against your disinterestedness ?

NOTHING,

NOTHING, was his answer: that is to say, added he, if the other, by disinterestedness, meant no more than a clearness from pecuniary views. He desired him, however, to take notice that his own candor had not made him give up a little, in giving up such appearances as made that virtue at least apocryphal. But that as he sincerely believed they were appearances only, he disdained to take the advantage of them; for that if money was not, as he granted it was not, the motive of your patriotism such as it is, that same patriotism, considering your original pretensions, had however been no very bad bargain to you. That, after all, if those your so much boasted self-denials of perquisites, gratuities, or sweets of office, were fairly cast up, they would amount to no more than a very moderate sum, to pass, as very justly it ought to pass, for the purchase-money of those places you have obtained, if in those refusals you politically had those places in view. No one can assert you had not: that
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is a point within your own breast, beyond the reach of human penetration, and perhaps even beyond your own, as it might lie buried from your own knowledge under other motives, which, as more plausible, would appear uppermost. You would not however be the first who, to compass his ends, had worn a mask of disinterestedness, so nearly resembling life, as to be mistaken for what it only imitated. That nevertheless, for his part, he readily believed that money was not your passion: nor did he even impute it to you, as an unpardonable fault, a procedure which, before your last abdication, did not however show, that you was so absolutely divested from all attachments but those to the interest of your country, as some of your admirers would have it believed; for that you had not been entirely without reason reproached with having, in more than one gentleman, considered rather a family-merit to yourself, than a national one. Not but undoubtedly some of them might have pretensions at least equal to

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your

your own, but which they must deserve to forfeit by the meanness of claiming under your title. Partiality to relations, was, he observed, a passion, or rather weakness, which carried its excuse with it in the humanity and goodness of heart it implied; that it was sometimes even justifiable on motives of security and trust; but that it was the height of impolicy, when the preceding minister had been violently reproached for a mis-use of that indulgence, or where great parade had been made of a rigorous self-denial of every branch of personal interestedness. But there were, he said, many other passions more obnoxious, which might place power in a light of temptation enough to personate a character in order to come at it. Passions, such as pride and ambition especially, which would be admirably served by disinterestedness, as it is commonly understood in purely a pecuniary sense, from its rarity and lustre, dazzling enough to blind the world to those passions themselves. That yet no one of discernment had ever so much as dreamed

dreamed of allowing any merit to the disinterestedness of a late prime minister ; who, after an enjoyment of that place for many years, had left little or nothing at his death. It was plain that money was not his passion ; though he had been justly accused of being the father of corruption, as being the first who had even boastingly opened a poison-shop of it. And indeed, so doing, he would have done more service to his country in his declared war against patriot virtue, than a false friend to it ; if that frankness of his would have opened her eyes on this the plainest of all consequences ; that so flagrant a corruption was an incontestable proof of the existence of some greatly unnatural point to be carried by it ; for corruption has always some end. Now, must it not have been difficult not to see what that end was, when the perpetual foreign drain it caused was so constantly felt ; and yet who was there ever opposed it, but in order to be taken off, or corrupted not to oppose it ? That besides the

greater passions, there were low faults or defects of character, from which men sometimes aspired to power; such as arrogance, self-conceit, vanity, presumption; in which case, a man under such disqualifications, was certainly more to be pitied, or at least less blamed, than those, who, not having the same excuse of passive blindness to them, and self-ignorance as their very nature implied in the owner, kept feeding those follies with a silly admiration, or used their country, or even the poor personage himself, so ill, as to contribute to the success of his pretensions.—That disinterestedness, whether real or only acted, was in fact a pandar to those passions or faults which constituted just objections to a candidate for high employs in the state; since the character of that single virtue once well established, would enable him to stand upon his importance, to play the game of prudery with the courtship of power, and to refuse much in order to get every thing.—That he looked on disinterestedness as undoubtedly the highest commendation

commendation of any servant of the public, in whatever station, from the highest to the lowest; but that alone, and without other requisites, it was no more sufficient to form a statesman, than mere animal courage would a general; though without it he could not be but a despicable one.—That the use a man made of his power after he had got it seemed to him the best rule of judgment of his intentions in aspiring to it; so that when the blunders of a precedent ministry had, in your railing at them, been the means of your skrewing yourself into power, of which you made no better use than to commit, even with aggravations,—the very same ones; can it be unfair to conclude, that whatever was your interest, or motive, it could not be that of repairing the mischief done by those blunders? Once more, the measures you had capitally inveighed against, were, from the very instant you got into place, grown all on a sudden so dear to you, that you seemed to think you could not do too much for them. That if not perfectly

sure

fure of standing well at one court, you was
 much mis-reported if all your delicacy had hin-
 dered you from cultivating a right honorable
 interest at the other. Happy, thrice happy for
 it, to possess so virtuous, so great a man ! espe-
 cially, if a partiality to Hanover, encouraged by
 so respectable an authority as his should take
 deeper footing there than it might perhaps with-
 out it ; to say nothing of the edifying example
 of his steadiness ! or of the essential service he
 must be of from his consummate knowledge of
 affairs ! Instead too of invoking the assistance
 of the untainted neutrals of rank, influence,
 character, and fortune, where alone you could
 expect to find it ; he observed, that you, with
 all your sublime disinterestedness, was not so
 fiercely untractable, but that you could once
 more draw very quietly with the avowed slaves
 of interest. How pleasant a sight to see you
 nestle in with the old rank courtiers, whom
 yourself not long before had treated with as little
 ceremony as if they had been recommendable

to

to no place, but in the Asylum or Magdalen-house for the reception of penitent State-prostitutes!

Your humble admirer interposed here, and, impatient to come to the point which he was sure would strike his antagonist dumb, asked him, if he could have the face to deny that you so greatly excelled all the ancients and moderns in eloquence, that even Demosthenes and Tully might tremble for the rank they had for so many ages enjoyed in the universal opinion? His answer was as follows :

That though to the vulgar-spirited many things he had advanced might, and doubtless would appear to flow from personal, or by him much disdained motives, or, in short, from any motive but the real good one, he was at least so far from any malevolence to you, that no one would have been more sincerely than himself rejoiced at your deserving a statue from your countrymen,

countrymen, or would have more readily sub-
 scribed his vote for one. That even, as it was,
 he thought it a strain of cruelty beyond that of
 the most virulent libel, for flattery, thus to hold
 you up for a mark to the index-finger of deri-
 sion, in her comparison of you to those two ora-
 tors. As to their eloquence, which, by the by,
 was fatal to themselves, and, though well meant,
 of little service to their respective countries, be-
 ing too far gone in their vergency to slavery
 and ruin; those two great men justified the
 high reputation of it by a thorough knowledge
 of the subjects on which they exercised it. The
 copious flow of it was owing to their unbounded
 acquisitions of matter applicable to each purpose;
 they were not, by the scantiness of their ideas,
 confined to ring the changes on a few sonorous
 cant-words, such as compose the whole of the
 modern patriot-dictionary. Neither of them
 was ever famous for modesty, and yet neither of
 them had so high an opinion of his powers of
 rhetoric, or so low a one of his countrymen, as,
 within

within a very little space of time to say and unsay, again say and unsay the same things, before the very same assembly, without the shadow of a reason for a fickleness, which could surely never have given a very favorable idea of their capacity. Masters of a flow of sense and expression constantly at hand, they did not stand in need of the excitation of contradiction to defend their speeches from the languor of insignificance, and even from the torpor of dulness: they did not, like electrical machines, require to be rubbed and chafed, before they could produce their fire. If invective indeed lay in their way, none could acquit themselves of it with more energy, which is certainly not the shining part of their character, but they never laid out for it; scolding, they could not but be sensible, was more liable to be laughed at, than likely to be admired. They made orations of business, and not a business of orations. Points of state were the objects of their solid discussion; not like our modern speech-makers, who have inverted the poet's boast with relation to his tuneful art; since they

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have

have turned theirs from things to sounds, from the heart to fancy †. Those ancient orators never considered the pomp of phraseology, the cadence of periods, the employment of metaphors and figures, but as the trimmings and garniture of eloquence, not as the art itself; which art indeed they no more are, than raree-show-reviews or theatrical camps are the art of war: for which however they have sometimes been mistaken. That, as to himself, he had lived to see admiration grown so cheap as to be thrown away on a mistake of vehemence for sincerity, of *ipse-dixit's* for reasons, of petulance for true spirit, and of intemperance of tongue for the genuine oratorical flow. That he had lived to see the corruption of the old manly British eloquence, which consisted in the energy of sound sense, conveyed in plain but expressive words, and terrible as Phocyon's axe to the luxuriant flowers

† That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart.

POPE'S Epist. to L. BOLINGBROKE.

of

of rhetoric; but now, since the making a trade of it, degenerated into a kind of Africanism, with all its characters of heat, impetuosity, bounce, turgidity, amplification, and emptiness; figured fire-works, and rivers of froth.

Here your admirer shrugged up his shoulders, as if, in pity of this captious caviller's taste, or spleen; and said, that though he denied you so much, he could not think that he would not grant, that at least you meant well to your country.

“ I grant it with all my heart, answered the other; but then you must grant too, that your begging that question is in fact giving your hero up. If all his mighty merit is to shrink up at last to the point of meaning well, what is there in that which he will not have in common with thousands, or rather millions, of others of his honest countrymen, who however would look very silly, if they were to put in for the ministry

without more pretensions than what that well-meaning alone implies, though no pretensions indeed signify without it? In times like these, when the nation, under your favorite m——r's driving, has borrowed so much upon the precipice, that it must be a prodigy which will save her from her downfall, is that prodigy, can you think, to be looked for in well-meaning alone, especially in the man who has the most contributed to bring her into this situation, whilst he was all the time assuring her that she was in the high road of prosperity? If now, then, the nation is, after all, to be told, that all his virtues, by the opinion of which she sees herself seduced into a wretched plunge, are to be summoned up in the single expression of that well-meaning which is to stand for them all, might she not with propriety cry out,

"Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country."

Certainly such a plea, in extenuation, as that of his well-meaning, would, in the present case,
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found not much better, than if a man having ruined his country, himself or friends should plead that his heart was right, but that he had not a head to lose. The plea too would be receivable in all humanity, and even in equity, in bar of any penalty; but would certainly be a very bad one, for making or continuing a man a minister: and that such a man should be of consequence enough to ruin a nation, would be no wonder; since it actually seems as if Providence, to mortify the pride of man, had abandoned the greatest events to the merest trifles; insomuch that sometimes such a person should have it in his power to do his country irreparable damage, whose service, beyond his ridding the common office-forms, had never been at the highest valuation, worth half a crown a-year to it."

"At this rate, said your ever-zealous adherent, you will grant this great man no merit at all? You would reduce him to the class of the most ordinary beings amongst mankind."——

"Far

“ Far be such a thought from me, answered his opponent, independently of its not being in the power of any thing I could say, or even perhaps of truth herself, to displume him. What I leave him is still more than what I would take from him, nor that but with all the reluctance of humanity, forced by superior considerations of the public good into the severity of examination. I allow him, you see, purity of morals, and especially a disinterestedness which, with my unaffected regard for truth, I should be very sorry to say I allowed to any of those who commonly pass for his competitors for power. But though undoubtedly no one can be a truly great statesman, without being at the same time a good man; it does not at all follow, that a good man may not be an execrable minister. The admitting, therefore, some moral virtues in the personage you admire, does not in the least imply the exclusion of disqualifications for power, which may co-exist with them, and as probably defeat the good effect of them, as the continental measures will
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that of the national ones. There is more danger yet in those disqualifications, when the faults which constitute them become epidemical; when a nation lays down her own permanent character of solid sense and judgment, to take up that of a man of power for the time being, who carries into the administration of affairs his own wild imagination, with all the pernicious passions and weaknesses constitutional to himself; in which case it may well be said that private faults are public calamities. The truth is, that nations have been too often seen to model themselves upon the personal character of those who have taken the lead of government in them. I have myself (continued he) seen the mass of people in the reign of a minister, who was even barefacedly the missionary of corruption, form herself upon his doctrine and practice so thoroughly, that under him, and under one of his pupils who succeeded him, the shame seemed to be to him who was not corrupted. I have seen again the same people, without however
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their renouncing any thing in the least of that corruption, additionally adopt, under another minister, not only his political Quixotry and rodomont-airs, but the grossest of his inconsistencies. And after all (continues he), for what is it that you would have me admire your hero? Is it for his exemplary steadiness? Is it for his intrepidity in out-braving where he cannot out-reason? Is it for his abhorrence of arrogance? or, if you rather please, for his supreme modesty? Is it for that stale harlotry of patriotism, his grimaces and coying it with those offers for which he had laid out, and in which his success was originally more owing to his powers of thwarting and annoying, than to any opinion of his ability as a statesman, or of his sincerity as a patriot? Is it for his grateful treatment of the public in his making of its good opinion of him a mounting-block, which, on his first desertion, he spurned the moment he was in the saddle, and on his second, worse than spurned, since he laid his account with keeping it, after he had

palpably

palpably forfeited it? Is it his consummateness in business, of the stile of which his being as great a master as he is of the substance, appears from those ever-memorable secret instructions, so decently, and no doubt so warrantably published with his majesty's title, gutted of its vowels, prefixed to them? Did he, on his accession to power, so much as propose or aim at any thing that looked like great? Did any part of his conduct carry with it the mark of a political genius, or vastness of just views? Did he apply any remedy, unless the aggravation of a cause of complaint may be called a remedy, to that most crying national evil against which who had exclaimed more than himself? Did he then employ himself to shut up that ever-gaping continental gulph, which in scarce half a century had swallowed so many millions, that one would have thought the nation had driven on a trade with the whole globe, to no earthly purpose but that of sacrificing the profits of it in this manner, and all so much in vain too! Or rather, has he not flung

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more money, more men, more national honor, down that same bottomless abyſs? Has he humbled France by fixing in her intereſt the ancient, and now diſgusted allies of Britain, or by taking from her what the ſtrength ſhe is actually gathering on the continent, through Britain's blunders, will moſt probably ſoon enable her to regain? In ſhort, to ſum up all in one queſtion, What has this great man done for a nation which had put it into his power to do ſo much?"

This laſt challenge your adherent answered in the beginning briskly, but rather flagged towards the end, as if himſelf had not been aware of his having no more atchievements of yours to recount in full of all the expectations you had raiſed. I need not however ſpecify them to you; they cannot well be unknown to yourſelf, and, God knows, the catalogue of them was not a very long one. Beſides, you have nauſeous flatterers enough at hand to magnify them to yourſelf and to the public; but it is by what is ſaid
againſt

against you that you must profit: I am to tell you then, that the man of contradiction stiffly denied your having any merit in the reduction of Cape-Breton; all the honor of the projection of which, as well as of the laudable, if sufficient, supplies to America, he gave to the people's own good sense; which, long before your last promotion to power, they had declared with so united, and so loud a voice, that it would not have been very politic, nor indeed very safe, for any minister not to have given way to the execution of such well-recommended national measures; which however, are likely to be more than blanked by your continental ones.

Your admirer then said, that he hoped no one would deny, that the situation of affairs in Britain was now so critical, that to attempt the depriving a real defender of this country of that confidence, which alone can enable him to defend it, must be a crime which could hardly deserve too great a discountenance, or too severe an animadversion.

“ There is still a greater crime than that (answered his opponent) and that is, a passive acquiescence in the nation's reliance, at such a time, on an imaginary defender ; which is what the Arabs so emphatically call leaning on a wave, in the height of a storm. Who that really loves his country can, without exclamations of grief, see her infatuatedly betrayed into a dependence, in such a crisis, on a support so unequal to the stress? a dependence, which must at once increase her danger, and most certainly her dishonor; if but for her being capable of such a choice? Besides that in her present circumstances, some advance it is towards her safety to know whom she is not to trust; some gain it is to lose a vain hope. The public cannot but plainly see, plainly feel, that the situation of things is such as to dispense from all standing upon ceremony in the representation of truths, the proceeding upon the sense of which must save the nation from sinking, if any thing can.

It

It was never yet, in Britain at least, high treason to doubt of a minister's capacity; but when there is no longer reason to doubt of it at all, and the consequence expected is an imminent catastrophe, he must be a defaulter to his country in her greatest exigency, and even an accomplice in her ruin, who would remain an unactive or silent spectator. If any thing said against your hero should be false, calumnious, or only the effect of party-spirit, of malice, or any other vile motive, it will fall to the ground of itself; the great Burleigh was libelled, the faithful Sully called Sejanus, in vain. There is nothing but truth that can make lasting impressions, or deserve to make any at all. But for a truth which has in the least an air of ill-nature, or of detraction, to deserve the being received at all, it is not enough for it to be only what it is, truth; but the manifestation of it should also be indispensably necessary to the service of the public: and then, indeed, the guilt would be to suppress it, or to have any fear but that of displeasing those
whom

whom only it can displease. In the mean time, whatever becomes of your real defender of the nation, as you call him, the nation would not have to tremble, but for the consequences of her not losing him. Surely in a country so great, so respectable, as the British one, there cannot be such a scarcity of capable subjects as to afford no neutrals of rank, of property, of influence, of abilities, men above any attachment or subserviency, but to the clear interests of the nation; men uninfected, in short, with that infamous party-spirit which is so great an enemy to truth and to the public welfare. Such characters could not at this time be suspected of ambition, or selfish views, in their acceptance of offices in the state. There can be little temptation to a scramble for power or interest in a country which most probably will ere long have neither power nor interest for herself, if measures are not effectually changed, and that right soon. But if no such persons are to be found, if the spirit of patriotism and common sense are entirely departed, then indeed

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it is over with the nation ; the nation herself is dead, and does not know it ; and what remains but to bespeak a general mourning for her ? ”

Here this strange man ended, and here I conclude this long letter ; for any oratorical strain in which, there cannot, considering the subject, need any apology. But, for your satisfaction, I shall just add, that I never thought of you but as I still continue to do : I believe, just as much as ever I did, that you are the man on whom your country is to depend. You have thoroughly confirmed my judgment of you, from the first notice I took of you ; and I am, with all due regard,

S I R,

ELIZIUM, the 2d of June
1759, according to your
computation of time.

Your's, &c.

it is over with the nation; the nation itself is
 unknown and does not know it; and what remains
 "and not gainst the nation a shield or a sword"

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